

**Testimony before the Higher Education Subcommittee of the Appropriations Committee**

**HB 06659: AN ACT CONCERNING THE STATE BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM ENDING JUNE 30, 2025, AND MAKING APPROPRIATIONS THEREFOR**

**Submitted by Francis M, Coan, Ph.D., Professor of History, Tunxis Community College  
February 15, 2023**

Senator Osten, Representative Walker, Senator Berthel, Representative Nuccio, and Distinguished Members of the Committee:

My name is Francis M. Coan. I am a Professor of History at Tunxis Community College, where I have worked for thirty-two years, and President of the Tunxis Professional Staff Organization.

CSCU managers have requested funding far in excess of the amount proposed in HB 06659. I ask you to support this request, but with an important caveat: only if any and all additional monies are encumbered so that they must be spent to directly assist students or hire more full-time faculty and staff at the colleges and universities.

Since 2012, the number of full-time faculty in the CSCU system has declined by nearly 10 percent, and the number of full-time classified staff by well over 20 percent, including over 40 percent in the community college system.<sup>1</sup> These are the professionals who educate, advise, mentor, and provide key support services to students. These people are your most effective student recruitment, retention, and success tools. Without them, students—especially our most disadvantaged students, who increase in number each year—are harmed.

Conversely, since 2012 the number of full-time CSCU managers has increased by over 12 percent, including an astonishing 39.9 percent in the community college system. The number of full-time administrators has risen over 12 percent.<sup>2</sup> These people, many of whom do not work on a college or university campus but rather in an office in Hartford or New Britain, do not teach students, do not provide vital services to students, and indeed seldom if ever see students.

Our students are disproportionately and increasingly working class or poor, young, and of color. Many come to us academically underprepared and facing many other challenges and obstacles, including poverty, hunger, homelessness, tumultuous family dynamics, the need to work to support themselves and their families, and psychological and emotional problems. While they enter college or university disadvantaged, they are as deserving of an opportunity to succeed as their socio-economically more fortunate peers. If they are denied this opportunity, they are being denied a fair shot at pursuing and achieving their version of the American dream.

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<sup>1</sup> Minutes of Joint Meeting of the Board of Regents and the Faculty Advisory Committee, 18 November 2022, Attachment C (p.p. 23-24) [BOR-FAC-Minutes-11-18-2022.pdf \(ct.edu\)](#)

<sup>2</sup> Minutes of Joint Meeting of the Board of Regents and the Faculty Advisory Committee, 18 November 2022, Attachment C (p.p. 23-24) [BOR-FAC-Minutes-11-18-2022.pdf \(ct.edu\)](#)

Accordingly, yes to more grants and scholarships for our students, especially the poorest and neediest. Yes to more full-time faculty, librarians, counselors; Financial Aid, Admissions, and Records staff; information technology and educational technology specialists; professional tutors and personnel in writing, mathematics, and science labs; on every college and university campus. No to more managers and administrators. No to moving more personnel from the colleges and universities, where the students are, to the system offices, where the students are not. No to prioritizing false economies over student success.

Thank you for your time. I'll be happy to answer any questions you have.